

# The 60 Plus Association

1600 Wilson Blvd. • Suite 960 • Arlington, VA 22209  
Phone (703) 807-2070 • Fax (703) 807-2073 [www.60Plus.org](http://www.60Plus.org)

*Abolish the Death Tax • Personalized Social Security • Senior Voice Newsletter  
Guardian of Seniors' Rights Award • Safe and Affordable Prescription Drugs*

*Rep. Roger H. Zion  
(R-IN, 1967-75)  
Honorary Chairman*

*James L. Martin  
President  
Pat Boone  
National Spokesperson*

*Rep. Beau Boulter  
(R-TX, 1985-89)  
Honorary Co-Chairman*

Chairman Michael K. Powell  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Ref: Docket No. 03-133  
**RECEIVED**

DEC 17 2004

November 18, 2004

Federal Communications Commission  
Office of Secretary

Dear Chairman Powell:

Throughout the long, punishing history of warfare, non-combatants have always found ways to profit at the expense of the people doing the fighting. That loathsome tradition would be perpetuated by raising the cost of a phone call home for the men and women of America's armed forces.

I'm writing to urge you and your fellow commissioners to prevent this from happening. Think of the kids risking their lives in Fallujah. Consider the reservists who had their service extended, leaving families at home struggling without the income from the reservists' civilian jobs. These people aren't complaining about the sacrifices they've been asked to make for their country, but it's unconscionable that the country they are defending would allow them to be hit with a 20 percent increase in the price of a long-distance call home.

That's what they have in store if the FCC passes regulatory changes that will raise the price of pre-paid long-distance calling cards. These cards are a communications lifeline home for U.S. service people across the country. Ninety-five percent of them use the cards because they are a relative bargain for GIs who don't have much in the way of money to spare.

Inflating the cost of the long-distance cards would also jeopardize the Armed Forces' Operation Phone Home program that allows the Pentagon to offer soldiers, sailors and air force members a limited allowance for their long distance calls. This would seem far afield from our President's repeated encouragement to support our troops. Even beyond the morality of financially exploiting those troops in wartime, there is no economic justification for doing this.


As a retired military officer, I might feel this injustice more strongly than some, but I find it beyond my

NO. 03-133-0  
List AD-117

comprehension that our government would even consider a policy change that would make phone calls home an expensive luxury rather than a frequent, affordable source of comfort for soldiers and families alike. Yellow ribbons and bumper stickers urging support for our troops would ring kind of hollow if the FCC decided to oblige telecom lobbyists and penalize our troops during wartime with a fat increase in the price of a phone call home.

I not only hope, but have every confidence that the FCC will stand with the troops and against an increase in long-distance card charges. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



James L. Martin

*60 Plus is an 11-year-old nonpartisan group with a less government, less taxes approach to seniors' issues. 60 Plus has become one of the fastest growing seniors groups in the country, doubling then tripling its support in the past year. 60 Plus now calls on support from nearly 4.5 million citizen lobbyists to print and mail millions of letters and petitions. 60 Plus produces a newsletter, SENIOR VOICE, and a SCORECARD, bestowing a GUARDIAN OF SENIORS' RIGHTS award on lawmakers in both parties who vote "pro-senior." 60 Plus has been called "an increasingly influential lobbying group for the elderly..."*